UNITED
NATIONS

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Secretariat

ST/IC/1995/43
6 July 1995

INFORMATION CIRCULAR

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: 1995 COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION FOR ARABIC VERBATIM REPORTERS

1. A competitive examination for Arabic verbatim reporters will be held on 19 December 1995 in New York, Cairo, Geneva, Vienna and other locations according to the number and location of qualified candidates convoked for the examination. The purpose of the examination is to establish a roster from which present and future vacancies for Arabic verbatim reporters will be filled. Staff members who are successful in the examination and are selected for inclusion in the roster will be assigned to fill vacancies as they occur in the Arabic Verbatim Reporting Section, Interpretation, Meetings and Documentation Division, on the recommendation of the Office of Conference and Support Services of the United Nations Secretariat in New York. Verbatim reporters are expected to serve a MINIMUM OF FIVE YEARS in a language post.

2. The examination is open to staff members of the United Nations at the P-3 level and below who meet the eligibility requirements. Staff members from subsidiary organs of the United Nations as well as staff members whose service is limited to a particular organ, fund or programme of the United Nations or to special missions are considered outside candidates for the purpose of this examination. The assignment of staff members who are successful in the examination and are selected to fill vacancies will be subject to the conditions set out in paragraphs 3 (f), 11 and 12 below.

3. Staff members of the Secretariat applying for the examination must:

(a) Have Arabic as their main language; 1/

(b) Have a perfect command of Arabic and an excellent knowledge of English. Knowledge of additional official languages of the United Nations would be considered an asset. The Board of Examiners, appointed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, requires that candidates'

claims to knowledge of official languages must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files. Staff members who have been enrolled in a United Nations language course in any of the languages claimed must have passed the United Nations language proficiency examination in that language. Candidates who have not attended the United Nations language courses in the languages claimed must substantiate their claims to knowledge of those languages. For this purpose, staff members should attach to their application a photocopy of either a diploma or a certificate from a language school or a brief explanation of how they acquired knowledge of the languages claimed. Staff members are advised to submit photocopies, not originals, of such documentation;

(c) Hold a degree from a university or institution of equivalent status at which Arabic is the language of instruction;

(d) Have three years of experience in verbatim reporting. The Board will also consider candidates who have three years of professional experience in journalism, interpretation, translation, editing or a related field. For the purposes of this examination, proof-reading and transcription will be considered related fields;

(e) Have word-processing skills or be subject to conditions set out in paragraph 3 (f) below. Staff members selected to fill vacancies will be required to operate a dictaphone and, while listening intermittently, to type out the text of a recorded speech using a dictaphone and a word-processor. Candidates who have demonstrable word-processing skills should indicate their keyboard spe l in paragraph F of the attached application;

(f) U[illegible] completion of a training period, staff members selected to fill vacancies who did not successfully complete the word-processing skills test at the time of the interview will be required to demonstrate their word-processing skills before they can be confirmed in their verbatim-reporting functions.

4. The requirement for a university degree or its equivalent from a university or institution of equivalent status at which Arabic is the language of instruction may be waived for staff members who, in the judgement of the Board of Examiners, have adequate post-secondary educational qualifications from a university or institution of equivalent status and adequate secondary educational qualifications from an establishment at which the language of instruction is Arabic, in addition to five years of continuous service with the United Nations Secretariat by 31 December 1989.

5. All applications for the examination will be reviewed by the Board of Examiners. All applicants will be notified of the Board's decision in respect of their application. THE BOARD'S DECISIONS ARE FINAL.

6. The written examination will consist of four papers:

I. Translation into Arabic of an English text (1 hour and 30 minutes);

II. Editing of a text in Arabic to bring it into conformity with the original English version, which will be made available to the candidates (2 hours);

III. Editing of and making the necessary logical and stylistic corrections to an original Arabic text (1 hour);

IV. (Optional) Translation into Arabic of one text chosen by the candidate from a total of four texts in Chinese, French, Russian or Spanish (1 hour).

7. The use of a dictionary or any other reference material will NOT be permitted during the examination.

8. On the basis of the results obtained in the written examination, the Board of Examiners will invite selected candidates to an interview, which will normally take place 10 to 12 weeks after the written component of the examination. The Board will interview each candidate to assess professional experience, knowledge of the United Nations and current events, willingness to serve at any duty station, adaptability to the prevailing working conditions of service in the Verbatim Reporting Section and, in particular, ability to work as a member of a team. The interview is an integral part of the examination. Therefore, candidates who are invited to an interview SHOULD NOT assume that they will be offered an assignment.

9. Candidates invited to the interview who have indicated word-processing skills will be requested to type out on a word-processor, from a dictaphone recording, one original 10-minute taped speech delivered in Arabic (one hour). No changes are to be introduced in the text. Successful candidates who do not successfully complete this word-processing skills test are subject to conditions set out in paragraph 3 (f) above.

10. On the basis of the overall results of the examination, the Board will recommend to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management the most suitable candidates for inclusion in the roster. All candidates admitted to the examination will be informed in writing of the Board's final recommendation in respect of their candidature. The Board's recommendations are NOT subject to appeal. The Board does NOT release individual scores.

11. Staff members selected to fill vacancies will be assigned as Arabic verbatim reporters for a trial period of two years. Staff members at the P-1 level or below will receive a special post allowance to the P-2 level. Staff members at the P-2 and P-3 level will be assigned at their respective levels.

12. Staff members with a special post allowance to the P-2 level and those already at the P-2 level who complete the trial period successfully (including conditions set out in paragraph 3 (f) above) and are recommended by the Office of Conference and Support Services and the Office of Human Resources Management may be promoted to the P-3 level. Staff members already at the P-3 level who complete the trial period successfully (including conditions set out in paragraph 3 (f) above) will be confirmed in their verbatim-reporting functions at the P-3 level. Staff members who do not complete the trial period successfully will be reassigned to posts at their previous levels and the special post allowance, if any, will be discontinued.

13. Arabic verbatim reporters are assigned, as members of a team, to meetings of various United Nations bodies and are required to prepare from sound recordings verbatim records of speeches delivered in Arabic or of simultaneous interpretation into Arabic of speeches made in other official languages of the United Nations. In preparing records, verbatim reporters must check for accuracy and make the necessary changes of style, syntax and grammar. For such editing, verbatim reporters must compare their texts with those transcribed in the original language of the speech or with the corrected version in another official language, with a view to producing records reflecting accurately and completely the spirit as well as the letter of the proceedings. In order to ensure such accuracy and completeness of the records, translation constitutes a major component of the work of Arabic verbatim reporters.

14. In order to service meetings of the Security Council, verbatim reporters are often called upon to work outside normal working hours, including weekends and holidays.

15. Staff members from Headquarters applying for the examination should complete the attached form and submit it to the following office NOT LATER THAN 30 October 1995:

1995 Competitive Examination for Arabic Verbatim Reporters
Recruitment and Placement Division
Room S-2535G
United Nations Secretariat
New York, N.Y. 10017
Fax: (1-212) 963-3683

16. In order to ensure receipt of all applications submitted by staff members from offices away from Headquarters, these staff members are requested to return their applications to the Recruitment and Placement Division through the chief administrative officer or director of the United Nations information centre of their respective duty stations before 30 October 1995, the deadline for receipt of applications in the Recruitment and Placement Division.

17. Staff members working at the United Nations Office at Geneva should address their applications to:

1995 Competitive Examination for Arabic Verbatim Reporters
Secretariat Recruitment Section
Office 266
United Nations Office at Geneva
CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
Fax: (41-22) 907-0006

18. Staff members may obtain copies of model examination papers from the Examinations and Tests Section, room S-2575, United Nations Secretariat, New York, N.Y. 10017. Staff members working at the United Nations Office at Geneva may obtain copies of model examination papers from the Training and Examinations Section, room 4, Le Bocage.

Notes

1/ "Main language" should be understood to be the language in which the candidate is best able to edit. Candidates' claims to Arabic as their main language must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files.

APPLICATION

1995 COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION FOR ARABIC VERBATIM REPORTERS 1/

INDEX NO. 2/ /_/_/_/_/_/_/

LAST NAME /_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/ Category /_/_/ Level /_/_/

FIRST NAME /_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/ Sex: Male /_/ Female /_/

Date of entry on duty: Month /_/_/ Year 19 /_/_/

Type of contract: _____ Expiration date: _____

Department/Office 3/ _____ Duty station: _____

Room No. _____ Extension _____

Have you taken this examination before? Yes /_/ in 19 /_/_/ No /_/

Have you taken another United Nations competitive examination? Yes /_/ in 19 /_/_/ No /_/

If yes, which examination(s)? _____

What is your main language? 4/ /_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/

A. Knowledge of other languages 5/

Language(s)	United Nations language programme (indicate highest level and date)	Courses taken at other institution (name and location)

B. Indicate your ability in each of the languages mentioned above

Language	Read		Understand		Speak		Write	
	Easily	Not easily	Easily	Not easily	Fluently	Not fluently	Easily	Not easily

/...

C. University degree or equivalent or post-secondary educational qualifications 6/

Name of institution/ Place and country	Language of/ instruction	Attended from/to month/year month/year	Degree 6/ or/ equivalent	Main field of study

D. Secondary school qualifications

Name of institution/ Place and country	Language of/ instruction	Attended from/to month/year month/year	Certificate / or equiv. 6/	Main field of study

E. Describe work experience (giving dates and length of time) in journalism, translation, editing, transcription, proof-reading or related fields

/...

F. Please

(a) Indicate your keyboard speed _____;

(b) Indicate your choice of languages for part IV of the written examination (see para. 6 of ST/IC/1995/43) _____.

I certify that the information I have provided above is correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

I have read information circular ST/IC/1995/43 and I understand that if I am successful in the competitive examination for Arabic verbatim reporters and recommended for inclusion in the roster, my assignment as an Arabic verbatim reporter will be subject to my acceptance of the conditions of service indicated in paragraphs 11 and 12 of that circular.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

Notes

1/ Staff members applying for this examination MUST complete this section. In addition, staff members MUST attach written proof of claimed secondary educational qualifications from establishments at which principal language of instruction is Arabic. Written proof of claimed post-secondary education must also be attached unless they were convoked for the G-to-P examination for promotion to the Professional category or another language examination. Applications which are incomplete or do not include essential information or documentation will be returned to the staff member for completion and resubmission within the deadline for receipt of applications in the Recruitment and Placement Division. In this connection, staff members are informed that extensions for receipt of application in the Recruitment and Placement Division will NOT be granted. Therefore, staff members are advised to submit their applications without delay.

2/ Appears normally on your monthly salary statement and personnel action forms. If not, please contact your Executive Officer to obtain your number.

3/ Please indicate department/office, e.g., OCSS, OPPBA, DPI, UNOG, UNOV or other (specify).

4/ "Main language" should be understood to be the language into which the candidate is best able to edit. Candidates' claims to Arabic as their main language must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files.

5/ Candidates are reminded that they must submit relevant documentation to substantiate their claims as appropriate in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 3 (b) of this circular.

6/ Give exact name and title in original language. Do not translate or equate. Copies of university degrees must be attached.